1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

186 609 (Australian aborigines from the mainland) they were not Tiwi and hence not real people, or at least not human enough to share the islands with the chosen people who owned them.

Thus, the word "Tiwi" did not mean "people" in the sense of all human [101] beings, but rather "we, the only people," or the chosen people who live on and own the islands, as distinct from any other alleged human beings who might show up from time to time on the beaches. This exclusion of outsiders from real "us-ness" and hence from real "human-ness" was continued when the Europeans began to arrive in the early nineteenth century, and certainly as late as 1930 the Tiwi continued to call and think of themselves as Tiwi, *the* people, and to use other words for all non-Tiwi, whether they were mainland aborigines, Malay fishermen, Japanese pearl-divers, French priests, or British officials, who penetrated into their exclusive little cosmos.

Their firm tradition that the twenty-five miles of ocean were adequate [173] to isolate them from the mainland is confirmed by certain objective distribu- 171 tional evidence. Several characteristic features of mainland native technology were absent on Melville and Bathurst Islands, notably the spear thrower and the curved (or return) boomerang. To anthropologists, the idea of an Australian tribe lacking spear throwers and curved boomerangs is almost a contradiction in terms, and the only feasible explanation is isolation and hence failure of these mainland traits to diffuse to the islands.[1]

That no culture stands absolutely still in its technology no matter how [411] isolated it may be is suggested by the fact that the Tiwi, while lacking the [531] spear thrower and curved boomerang of the mainland, elaborated their wooden spears to a complexity of design and a degree of decoration unknown on the mainland, and also developed a much greater assortment of straight throwing sticks, made of hardwood, than any mainland tribe. Moreover, their carved and elaborately painted grave posts are unique among Aus- [764] tralian tribes, and point up both the Tiwi isolation from the mainland and the [511] favorable food situation which permitted the leisure time necessary to manufacture the elaborate posts as well as the elaborate ceremonial spears. In the nontechnological aspects of their culture we find in many respects the same absence of mainland traits and the same elaboration of traits that were distinctively or even uniquely Tiwi. Male initiation ceremonies on the mainland focus upon circumcision or subincision or both; neither custom was practiced by the Tiwi, who instead included in their initiation ritual the forcible plucking out of the pubic hair of the novice. The degree of plural marriages achieved under their marriage rules was far greater than anything reported for the mainland; the absolute prohibition of any female, regardless of age, being without a husband was unknown elsewhere in Australia; certain features of the kinship system fail to conform to any of the mainland norms, and so on. Wherever we look in their culture we get the strong impression of an Aus-

[197 524] [1] A toy spear thrower, played with by children, was in use, but this may be the result of post-white contact. Its native name—*pani*—seems most un-Tiwi, and a likely guess is that it was introduced by Cooper's mainlanders, being accepted as a toy for children but scorned as childish by the adult men.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

nothing is so startling as to be told that the Tiwi almost completely lacked what we must call "positive" magic. Such familiar mainland practices as bone pointing or "singing" a man to injury or death were completely unknown on the islands, and though references to people dying through supernatural agency were often made, it was very hard to find any positive techniques or known practitioners of such techniques. Briefly the Tiwi may be said to have believed that magical acts were possible but to have lacked any knowledge of how to perform them. If, as anthropology is wont to teach, magic is used in the simpler societies to handle and control the unpredictable or mysterious areas of life, then this absence of magic among the Tiwi needs an explanation. Our hypothesis is that the Tiwi did not use magic in human relations because they had never invented magic for use in other unpredictable areas of life—for example, to control the natural world. And they had never invented magic to control their natural world because their physical environment was on the whole a satisfactory and not a hostile universe.

If we run through the areas of life that many of the simpler peoples use magical means to control, we find that many of them were not problems for the Tiwi. The rainfall and water supply were more than adequate; the food supply was good, needing only people to come and gather it; wild animals (except snakes and crocodiles) were unknown; tropical diseases (except yaws) scarcely existed; cyclones, tornados, and earthquakes were very rare, and thunder and lightning were no more frightening there than in, say, Chicago. Death, of course, is mysterious and unpredictable everywhere, but to handle that they had most elaborate burial and mourning customs that were not magical but collective rituals. Perhaps the most favorable feature in the whole friendly Tiwi universe was the absence of any neighboring tribe. Their cultural isolation removed all fear or suspicion of what the foreigners next door might be up to, and one gets the impression from the literature, though it has not been systematically explored, that the hotbeds of magic making and sorcery were areas of the primitive world, like Melanesia or Central Australia, where people were acutely conscious of their neighbors and always expecting magic and sorcery to be directed by them across the village or tribal boundaries. The Tiwi, having no neighbors, had nobody to be suspicious of except each other, and their suspicions of each other were mostly rational suspicions, of men motivated like themselves and using the same political tricks against each other.

The strongest support for the hypothesis that the Tiwi found their environment a friendly and reassuring universe to live in comes from their wide elaboration and reliance upon the negative form of magic called taboo. As a tribe they were magic free but taboo ridden. Their generic word for anything sacred or forbidden or untouchable was *pukimani*, a word which in its most common form referred to a state of special being in which a person or thing temporarily was. Thus mourners were *pukimani* for the period of their mourning, youths undergoing initiation were *pukimani* during the ceremonies, a woman who had just given birth was *pukimani* for a week or two afterwards. Dead bodies were *pukimani* until buried; graveposts were *pukimani*

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

CHAPTER I

The Art of the Tiwi

1. THE ART FORMS

ALTHOUGH Melville Island is separated from the mainland of Australia by the Dundas Strait, only fourteen miles in width, the art forms on either side of this swift-running tideway bear little resemblance to each other. That of the mainland, of which the bark and cave paintings of Oenpelli are typical (Mountford, 1956, pp. 112–264; Spencer, 1928, pp. 802–24), is representational, and among the most decorative art forms employed by the Australian aborigines, while that of Melville Island is highly formalized, and cannot be interpreted without the aid of the artist. In this respect (although they employ different motifs) the art of the Melville Islanders resembles that of the aborigines of Central Australia (Mountford, 1937, pp. 84–95).

2. MEDIUMS OF EXPRESSION

The aborigines of Melville Island,[8] like those on the mainland (Spencer, 1928, p. 793) painted designs on the inside of the sheets of bark that made up their wet-weather shelters. Basedow (1913, p. 320, Pls. 19–20) figured bark paintings he collected from bark shelters on Melville Island, and Campbell (1834, p. 151), referring to shelters he saw near Fort Dundas (Punata), in Apsley Straits, writes, "Some of them were ornamented with figures drawn in white pipeclay; one, in particular, was neatly and regularly done all over, representing the cross-bars of a cell."[9]

Under normal tribal conditions, however, it is in the carving and painting of the elaborate burial poles and the ceremonial spears, coupled with the decorating of the large bark baskets, that the aborigines of Melville Island find an outlet for their artistic efforts.

The effect of the *pukamuni* burial ceremony was evident in many of the bark paintings collected on the expedition. For example, Pl. 3D, Pl. 54F, and Pl. 54A, are essentially the same designs as a Melville Island artist would use to

[8] For the sake of simplicity I will, in future, use the term, Melville Island, or the tribal name, Tiwi, to indicate the Melville and Bathurst Island culture, both of which are part of the same tribal unit.

[9] This would have been a design similar to that on bark painting (Pl. 52D).

[Cp. 18 blank]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

INTRODUCTION

MELVILLE ISLAND (Fig. 1), the research field of the 1954 National Geographic expedition, is, with the exception of Tasmania, the largest of the Australian islands. Eighty miles from east to west, and seventy from north to south, it rises barely five hundred feet above the sea. Its level surface is covered with a monotonous grey-green forest of eucalypts and acacias, whose monotony is broken only by the steep cliffs and sandy beaches of the coastline, the salt-water creeks which cut deeply into the northern coasts, and the almost impenetrable mangrove swamps that line those waterways.

Between Melville Island and the mainland are the swiftly running tideways, the reefs and shoals of the Clarence and Dundas Straits, tideways so dangerous that, before the installation of a series of flashing light-buoys, no ocean-going ship would attempt to navigate their broken waters in the darkness.

Abel Tasman, in 1644, was the first European to sail along the east, north, and west coasts of Melville Island and the adjacent Bathurst Island,[1] naming Cape Van Diemen and Van Diemen Gulf after the Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies. As Tasman's account of that journey was lost, we do not know whether he actually landed on the islands, or only saw them in the distance.

Sir Philip King circumnavigated the two islands in 1818 and in 1824 the British Government, both to prevent the French from settling along the northern coasts of Australia and to protect British commerce from the rapidly expanding Dutch trade, established a military post at Fort Dundas, on the Apsley Straits. After five unhappy years the authorities moved the garrison to Port Essington, on the Coburg Peninsula, on the mainland, but not before both Sir Gordon Bremer (12th Nov. 1824) and Major Campbell (1834, pp. 135–60) had made some excellent observations on aboriginal graves, burial poles, bark paintings and canoes.

In the early days of this century, a buffalo hunter, Joe C. Cooper, having gained the confidence of the warlike people of Melville Island, known as the Tiwi tribe, established a camp near Cockle Point (Fig. 1) on the south-western corner of Melville Island. There he earned a living shooting buffaloes for their hides, buffaloes whose forbears had escaped from the settlement at Fort Dundas.

[1] Melville and Bathurst Islands, separated by the narrow Apsley Straits, are both a geographic and cultural unit.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

After Cooper had established himself a number of investigators, Brown in 1905, Klaatsch in 1906, Spencer and Basedow in 1911, and Fry in 1913, paid short visits to the Islands, and recorded valuable information on the aborigines and their ceremonial life.

Following their departure no research work was carried out until 1929, when Hart spent a year or more among the aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands. But though Hart must have collected a great deal of data among the almost untouched aborigines of those times, he has published only two short papers on their customs. (Hart, 1930, pp. 167–80; pp. 280–290.)

Again there was a lag in time, except for a short paper by Harney and Elkin (1942, pp. 228–34), until Pilling in 1953, stationed at the Bathurst Island Sacred Heart Mission, spent over a year studying aboriginal life and social organization.[1]

In 1954 the National Geographic Society's expedition established a camp at Snake Bay on the north coast of Melville Island (Fig. 1), and for six months studied the ethnology, the geology and the ornithology of the area. Although the National Geographic Society of America provided the bulk of the funds, Mr. John Bonython of Adelaide financed the geological survey of Melville and Bathurst Islands.

The expedition party of American and Australian scientists was an excellent example of international co-operation. It was made up of Miss Jane Goodale, ethnologist, and Dr. Carleton Coon, Professor of Anthropology, both from the University of Pennsylvania; Mr. David Parsons, ornithologist from Yale University; Mr. Brian Daily, geologist from the University of Adelaide; Mr. William E. Harney, guide, Mr. George Joy, cook, and myself, as leader and ethnologist.

Our combined research covered a wide field. Miss Goodale concentrated on the place of the women and children in the community, Mr. Parsons collected and studied the birds of the island, Mr. Daily, by an examination of the outcropping rocks, established the geological history of Melville and Bathurst Islands, whilst I, apart from the duties of leadership, concentrated on the art, myth, and particularly the burial ceremonies.

During their visit, Dr. Carleton Coon and his wife made a special study of the physical characteristics of the aborigines.

I chose Melville Island as a centre of research, because it was evident from the scattered writings of Basedow, Fry, Hart, Harney, Spencer and

[1] The Sacred Heart Mission was established on Bathurst Island, opposite Cooper's camp, during 1911.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
O120 Tiwi O120

101 others that the culture of the Melville and Bathurst Islanders was markedly
121 different from that of the adjacent mainland people.

It seemed evident, also, that this difference in the cultures was the result
101 of isolation for which two possible factors were responsible: (a) the natural
131 water barrier created by the Dundas and Clarence Straits (Fig. 1), and (b)
182 the inability of the Tiwi to cross those swift and dangerous tideways in their
501 primitive canoes. These canoes consisted of no more than a folded sheet of eucalyptus bark, sewn together at either end with strips of lawyer vine, caulked with mud, and strengthened at the gunwales with light saplings. The old men of Melville Island assured me that, before Cooper brought across the mainland wooden canoe (1905) bark canoes were their only means of water transport.

174 I am convinced, from my personal experience with similar canoes in
501 north-eastern Arnhem Land, and my sea journeys across the Dundas and Clarence Straits, that the bark canoes of the Tiwi were far too weak to have withstood the buffetings of those turbulent waters. Nor would it have been possible for the mainlanders to have made the journey before they acquired
[175] the wooden canoes from the Malays, which reliable historical records indi-
[177] cate was not before the end of the eighteenth century.[8] Previous to that time, these people would have had only a bark canoe similar to that used by the Melville and Bathurst Islanders. It would be some time, too, after the aborigines acquired their new wooden craft, before they would be sufficiently skilled to make that perilous journey to Melville Island, even
[609] had they wished to do so. Further, the Tiwi were notably unfriendly and killed anyone who visited their shores. It is likely, then, that during the historically short time that the aborigines of the mainland possessed the wooden canoe, their visits would have had little, if any, effect on the culture of the Tiwi.

From this evidence, it appears certain that for an unknown, and possibly
177 a lengthy period, the aborigines of the Tiwi tribe have been almost, if not
114 completely, isolated from outside cultural influences.

This supposition is supported by Hart (1930, p. 170), who states that, "It was impossible, in fact, quite unnecessary, for them (the Tiwi) to visit the mainland in their bark canoes, . . . Until the advent of white men, the Melville Islanders were not aware that any other people existed but themselves."

Foelsche (1882, p. 17), however, states that "The Melville Islanders occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras (women),

[8] Mountford, 1956, p. 410.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

they speak one language and they regard a certain defined area of land as belonging to them.

The Australian tribe is a collection of persons who speak a common language, or what they themselves regard as such, practise the same customs, and normally have a name by which they distinguish themselves and their language. The inhabitants of Melville and Bathurst Islands are therefore to be regarded as a single tribe, but it is difficult to find a true tribal name. The Uwaidja of Port Essington call the Melville Islanders, *Wuŋuk*, as Spencer notes, but the Melville Islanders scarcely regard it as necessary to call themselves anything. The local group of which a man is conscious of being a member is the horde, and until the advent of the white man, the Melville Islander was not aware that any other people existed except themselves. It was impossible and also quite unnecessary for them to visit the mainland in their bark canoes more especially as the coast around Cape Don and Cape Hotham, dimly seen on clear days, was regarded as the abode of departed souls, *Tibambinumi*, the home of the dead. It was apparently just as impossible or unnecessary, or perhaps danger was the chief deterrent, for the Uwaidja or the Larakia to visit Melville Island.

The result was that the people, with no contact with people not of their own tribe, did not really need a tribal name, and very seldom used the word *Tiwi*, which is the only one that can be regarded as the name of the tribe.

Tiwi is a word that is known and but seldom used. Some of the younger men were in fact surprised and interested when they heard the old men using it in response to my enquiries. There is no question of secrecy or tabu about it. In common everyday use are the words *tini*, meaning a man of one of the Melville or Bathurst Island hordes, *i.e.*, a male member of the Tiwi, and *tiŋa* meaning a female member of the tribe. *Tiwi* is the plural form of *tini* and *tiŋa*. It is often said by informants that *tini* means a man, and *tiŋa* a woman, irrespective of colour or race, but in point of fact these words are only used as applying to members of the *Tiwi*, and some other word would be used in referring to a white man, or a Larakia or Uwaidja.

Objection may be made to the adoption as the tribal name of these people of a word that theoretically at any rate seems simply "men" in the ordinary language. But in point of fact the word is never used except

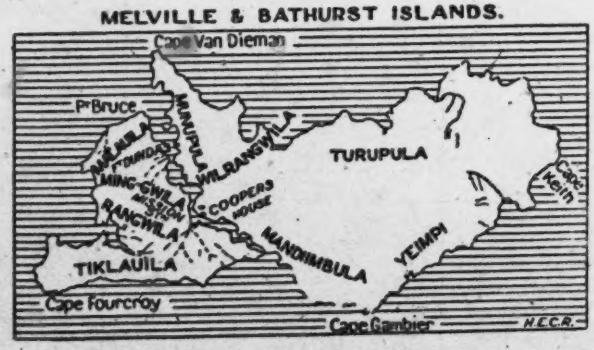
3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the same way as such words as Larakia, Worgaits, Uwaidja, etc., are used. For example, if a Melville Islander at home is asked who a certain group of natives are, he will reply in his own language that there are, *e.g.*, two *Tiklauila* and two *Munupula*, these being horde names. Ask him the same question in Darwin about another group and he will reply, *e.g.*, "*Yatapinti Tiwi, irira Larakia*" (four Tiwi and two Larakia); he does not mean to insult the Larakia by denying them the status of men; he is merely applying the term *Tiwi* to men of his own tribe. Should he be uncertain of the tribe of the other, he will say "*Yatapinti Tiwi, irira wanarui*" (literally "four Tiwi and two blackfellows"); *wanarui* being a term denoting black fellows as distinct from white men.

In other words, when at home on the Islands, a man thinks of himself as a *Tiklauila* or a *Munupula*, or whatever his horde may be, since there he feels strongly his bond of solidarity with the fellow members of his horde. When in contact with other tribes, however, as in Darwin, he thinks of himself as Tiwi, a member of a group which despite the divisions inside it, is nevertheless a group distinct from other tribes, and this seems quite an adequate reason for us to adopt Tiwi as the tribal name.

The hordes number nine, five on Melville and four on Bathurst Island. This division is not strictly accurate, as may be seen from the accompanying map; the *Malauila* territory, while mainly on Bathurst stretches across Apsley Strait on to Melville, while a portion of Bathurst Island, including the site of the Mission Station, is *Mandiimbula* territory.

MELVILLE & BATHURST ISLANDS.



MAP SHOWING DISTRIBUTION OF THE TIWI HORDES

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Like other concrete things in this culture, the hordes have a multiplicity of names, and this has caused a certain amount of confusion and doubt as to their actual number. A full list of these names is as follows. The name most commonly used in each case by the natives themselves is given first in each case, as these are the names used throughout this account of the Tiwi culture.

1. *Tiklauila*: *Arupula, Matjulauila, Muliuŋabila, Tuŋalimbila, Taiŋauila, Pilamiruntabila, Aritui, Wayiŋui, Adauinabila, Payondiŋaluwila, Pukuŋinabila, Primanduwila.*
2. *Wraŋgwila*: *Mungwaiuabila, Puianarurwila, Tintauwila.*
3. *Miŋgwila*: *Wonuruwila, Kalipraniŋuwila, Malamikwariuŋabila.*
4. *Malauila*: *Mirkalambila, Pulunduwila, Iwiriwila, Malamuŋoriuŋabila, Papiuŋabila.*
5. *Wilraŋgwila*: *Panodjiwila, Mirkawiuŋabila, Marawauila, Kambuŋambila.*
6. *Munupula*: *Urumaiawila, Tunuŋabila, Imaluwila, Parumunupula.*
7. *Turupula*: *Yuŋanduwila, Tikampula.*
8. *Yeimpi*: *Arupontuwila, Araŋgitarila, Palwiuŋabila.*
9. *Mandiimbula*: *Tumulambila, Tilambila, Urumaiuŋabila, Uruwinapila, Ilubiuŋabila.*

If Spencer's list[1] is compared with mine it will be seen that allowing for our different spellings, his "Kambuambulla" are really the *Marawauila*, his "Cherupulla" are the *Turupula*, his "Purumunupulla" are really the *Munupula*, his "Mindaluulla" probably mean the *Miŋgwila*. "Ulobu" (or *Ilubi*) is a place-name of a favourite camping ground in the country of the Mandiimbula slightly to the north-west of Cape Gambier; hence *Ilubiuŋabila*. "Marungallambu" similarly is a camping ground in the territory of the *Malauila*. "Barranpunalli" I am unable to trace; *Punali* (or *Bunali*) is, however, the name for the district around the English Point Alley. "Arangijerulla" is an alternative name for the *Yeimpi*, but I prefer to spell it *Araŋgitarila*, while "Balauiungambulla" is obviously a misspelling of the *Palwiuŋabila*, which is another alternative name for the *Yeimpi*.

To explain this multiplicity of horde names, and also to throw some light on the actual composition of the horde, I propose to consider one of the hordes in detail, taking for this purpose the *Tiklauila*.

[1] Spencer, *Native Tribes of the Northern Territory*, 1914, page 45.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

period is the prelude to the complete lapsing of the title to the district. 423
The prominent part played in this institution by the father's father and the 628
fact that most of the present districts held on such a title are held from the 613
father's father whereas comparatively few are held through an ancestor 685
(necessarily more remote) who has been forgotten, seems to indicate that *yirt' amini* holdings do not last more than three generations before they lapse for want of sufficient able-bodied men to enforce them.

It must not be imagined that the whole of Melville and Bathurst 423
Islands are divided into such holdings nor indeed that everyone in the tribe 613
belongs to such a group. The main obstacle to this lies in the self- 621
evident fact that if one's father's father dies in the territory of another horde, as must have quite frequently have happened in the days of marauding expeditions between hordes, there can be no such thing as a *yirt' amini* holding of the district wherein he died. Moreover there are numbers of the Tiwi whose fathers and grandfathers died young, and the essence of the system is that the grandfather should have been old enough to have sufficient male children and grandchildren to enforce the claim.

It can easily be seen from the above how it comes about that each horde has a number of names, since each one of the *yirt' amini* group-names 621
is liable to be applied to the whole horde merely by adding *-ila* or *-ula* to 101
the name of the district they control.

Spencer's list of horde names is at variance with mine, because he 101
did not realize this. Out of six men of the *Tiklauwila*, one might easily 114
get six different answers to his question as to their "country," each 103
giving the name of his *yirt' amini* group. It is quite possible that the 621
horde names that are used here—*Tiklauwila*, *Munupula*, etc.—are really *yirt' amini* names that have become extended to include a whole horde either by the identification of a very powerful *yirt' amini* group with a horde in the eyes of the rest of the tribe or by the former horde name becoming tabu and a *yirt' amini* name being substituted. This view is strengthened by the fact that in one or two of the hordes, the horde name is still in use as the name of a district. Thus whereas the whole of the territory of the *Wilraŋgwila* on the north of Melville is technically *Wilraŋgu*, the native name for Karslake Island, a small portion of that territory, is *Wilraŋgu*. Similarly *Malau* is a creek in the territory of the *Malauila* horde.

A man is born into the horde of his father. Should his father die and 591
his mother be taken by a member of another horde he goes with her, and [611]
WHILE THE WOMAN WILL ALWAYS BE LOOKED UPON 621
AS BELONGING TO HER FORMER HORDE, THE CHILD [768]
CHANGES HIS, TAKING THAT OF HIS STEPFATHER.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

while the woman will always be looked upon as belonging to her former horde, the child changes his, taking that of his step-father. Very often when a boy is aged about 14 or 15 he is taken by his mother's brother of another horde to live with that horde for some years. Often he is initiated there and not quite so often he will spend the rest of his life there. It is no uncommon occurrence for a man to have spent his adolescent years in two or three different hordes in addition to the one into which he was born, always under the supervision of one or other of his classificatory mother's brothers. Two cases at least occurred in the last few years of young unmarried men who had been reared and initiated in one horde leaving that horde of their own free will and going to live permanently in another because they considered they had there more chance of obtaining a wife.[1]

On the other hand, a woman will usually be looked upon as belonging to the same horde all her life, even though she marries young and goes to live with another horde. To the tribe at large such a woman is for example a *Tiklawila*, though she has lived with the *Yeimpi* ever since her marriage, and her *Tiklawila* origin will never be forgotten.

As a result of these conflicting customs it is difficult to lay down any definite rule in regard to membership of the horde. The best generalization is perhaps to say that a woman retains all her life a connection with the horde into which she is born no matter where patrilocal marriage may lead her, while a man on the other hand belongs to whatever horde he is living with at the moment, this being normally but not at all invariably his father's horde.

TtotemISM

The Tiwi have a system of matrilineal totemic clans. Each clan has a special relation to one or sometimes to two and in two instances to three species of natural objects. The members of the clan have a solidarity of their own, helping each other in tribal fights, speaking of each other as "brother" despite the variation in their actual blood relationship, and not marrying women of their own totem. There are, however, few of the distinctive features of Australian totemism as known from other parts of the continent. They eat their totem without any

[1] It was hardly a logical proceeding as one left the *Tiklawila* for the *Munupula* and the other (quite independently) left the *Munupula* for the *Tiklawila*.

3: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

restriction; they have no ceremonies for the increase of the totem species.

Since the totem of a child is that of its mother it follows that the members of one totemic clan are found in different hordes, and inversely each horde contains persons of several totemic clans. Nevertheless each totem is associated in the minds of the natives with a particular locality or district. This association appears in the myths, there being a number of stories which connect particular natural species with particular localities. Thus each clan may be said to have its ancestral home or centre, but there is little or nothing of any feeling of reverence or ritual attachment to the home of one's totem. Taking it all in all Tiwi totemism does not amount to very much compared with the elaborate forms of totemism found in other parts of Australia.

The word for totem and totemic clan is *pukui*. But the same word means also "sun" and in addition "breath." The connection between these three concepts denoted by one word is not at all apparent.

The totems are grouped into three phratries. The term phratry is here used in the sense of an exogamous group containing a number of clans and not being a moiety. The phratries are unnamed. Should a man want to mention a phratry he will call it by the name of one of the totemic clans composing it. He will generally use the name of his own totem clan if his own phratry is in question, or that of the clan that is powerful in the phratry. Thus the phratry that I am calling Phratry 1, will more often be called *Tjilarui* than anything else because at the present time the *Tjilarui* clan is very numerous and many of them are the kind of people who are usually much in the public eye. For a similar reason Phratry 2 is more often called *Timiriringui* than anything else, and Phratry 3 is usually *Tokwombui*. There is a much stronger feeling of solidarity with one's clan than with one's phratry, which will perhaps explain that while the clan name is very important there seems no need, or much less need, for any specific name for the phratry.

A complete list of the clans and their totems is given below. Each clan name has three forms, masculine singular, feminine singular, and plural, and these are given in the list in this order.

Clan Name	Totems
Phratry 1.	
(*a*) *Tjilati, Tjilariya, Tjilarui*	jaberoo
(*b*) *Ariri, Aruwidina, Aruwidui*	mullet

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

302 black; ears, red; hair and beard on lower part of chin, yellow. *Case* (4): Lower half of face from below the eyes to the chin, yellow, excepting the lips and the immediate surrounding, which are red; the upper half of face divided vertically in a median line, the left segment being black and the right red. *Case* (5): A broad, horizontal band of black extends across the forehead and the eyes; beneath this, the whole face is yellow, excepting (as in the previous case) the nose and lips, which are red. *Case* (6): A broad horizontal band of black across the forehead; beneath this, the whole surface from the eyes to the level of the nostrils, yellow; the remaining portion including the lips and chin, red. *Case* (7): The crown of the head and hair, red, the forehead yellow; a black horizontal band across the eyes, below which the whole surface is yellow, excepting the nose and lips (as in previous cases), which are red. More complicated patterns are better understood by referring to the sketches.

Body Scars.

304 [101] A type of cosmetic body-scars is prevalent on the island, which is unique and different from the system found on the mainland. The production of this permanent ornamentation is, as elsewhere, dependent on the formation of an elevated cicatrix. This is done by cutting the skin and artifically inducing a prolific granulation by

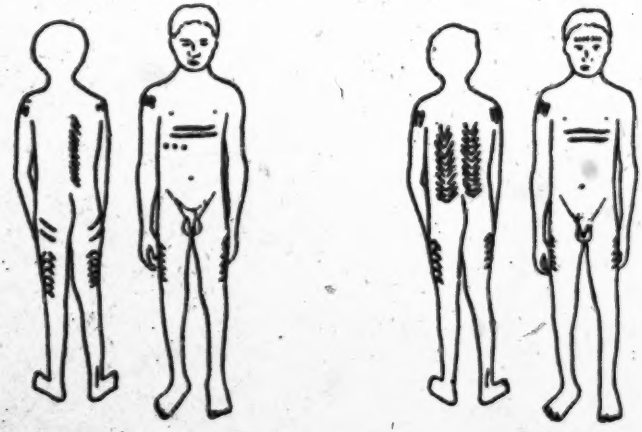


FIG. 2.

keeping the edges of the wound apart with foreign matter, such as ochre and ashes. [171] On the mainland we find such cicatrices in the form of horizontally or vertically disposed parallel ridges on various parts of the body. Although to a small extent such are also found on Bathurst Island, the characteristic pattern there is one made in direct imitation of an object of nature, namely, the frond of the zamia palm (*Cycas media*). The former simple type of cicatrices, consisting of two to five,

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

or more, parallel ridges, is found first, as vertically disposed ridges, about 10 centimetres in length, on the outer surface of the upper arm, in the region of the deltoid muscle (*vide* Fig. 2, A and B); secondly, as two or three horizontal ridges, about 20 centimetres long, upon the chest and abdomen, either in the epigastrium or immediately below the nipples, or in the umbilical region; thirdly, as two or three ridges, horizontally disposed or slightly inclined from back to front, on the buttocks and outer surface of the thighs (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

Occasionally a horizontal row of short vertical scars is cut upon the forehead immediately above the eyes (*vide* Fig. 2, B); and also an asymmetrical vertical group on the chest or back consisting of a number of parallel scars which slant outwards and downwards from the sternum or spine, respectively (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

The palm-leaf pattern is composed of a series of V-shaped figures, whose angles rest one within the other and point downwards (or upwards as the case may be) and are so disposed as to lie one immediately above or below the other in a vertical line; the enclosing sides standing out as parallel and inclined ridges. The constituent V's are often slightly larger in the centre of the group than at either

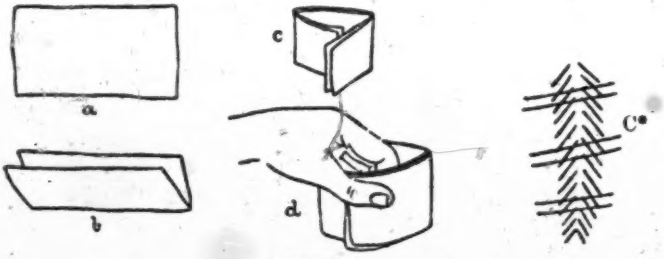


FIG. 3.

end. There is little doubt that the incentive to this design was given by the leaf of the "*Zamia*" (*Cycas media*). The designs, being of different dimensions and of different lengths according to their situation, were observed on the back (on both or either side of the spine) and on the upper and outer surfaces of the arm and thigh (*vide* Plate XVI). The number of the completed palm leaves, in any one particular part of the body, varies. The usual number is from one to three on the arms and thighs, and from two to five, or more, on the back. The design was not noticed on the chest or abdomen. Occasionally a design on the thigh might be seen modified by additional pairs of horizontal scars[1] (*vide* Fig. 3, C*).

[1] I also observed the same "palm-leaf" scars on the chest, back, and arms of Melville Island natives. These natives also paint their faces with ochre; one conspicuous method in use is to paint the hair yellow, the nose red, and to daub the chest yellow over the region of the sternum.

Professor H. Klaatsch also noticed some of the scars on the Melville Island natives and stated that "they are totally different from the ornamentations on the mainland. They seem to imitate leaves arranged on a branch; but I make the suggestion that they are connected with the arrangements of the barbs on spears." *Rep. Austr. Assoc. Adv. Science*, 1907, vol. xi, p. 586.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

In a few instances, a horizontal row of small circular scars was noticed beneath the cicatrices of the chest, extending from the axillar to the sternal-line, on one half of the body only. They appeared to have been burned into the skin by the heated end of a fire-stick[1] (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

Circumcision not practised.

Circumcision is not, as elsewhere in Australia, one of the attendant mutilations during the ceremonies of initiation, at the age of puberty. No cases were noted either on Bathurst or Melville Island. In this respect the Islanders resemble the fast disappearing Larrekiyas of the Port Darwin district and certain other tribes of Cape York and the adjoining islands.[2]

The pubic hairs are removed by "pulling them out" with the hand in the same way as the upper lip is cleared of its growth. While standing in conversation, the natives have acquired a peculiar habit of pushing the penis back between the thighs and keeping it from view by crossing one leg over the other.

Habitations.

The islanders build no permanent huts or structures to live under. Apart from the shelters afforded by local or natural conditions, such as overhanging trees, the only form of artificial shelter noticed was prepared from the bark of a tree. A long sheet is cut from the trunk and doubled crosswise at its centre. The two ends are then stuck into the ground at an angle of say forty-five degrees. Similar shelters are found on the north coast and elsewhere on the mainland. In the absence of any more permanent structures, the islanders are, in this respect, not so far advanced as the continental Australian aboriginal. Camp fires are, as usual, much in evidence and kept alight during the whole of the night. Fire-sticks are carried during the day time. Sticks and dry timber, collected to feed the fires, are broken to the required length, not across the knee but over the crown of the head. Small sheets of paper bark (*Melaleuca sp.*) are used as mats to lie on when sleeping or camping.

Personal Wear.

Both male and female walk about in the nude state. The body is anointed with grease and besmeared, in one or more shades of colour, with ochre. The females carry folded sheets of paper bark or large food-carriers about with them, which, upon the approach of strangers, they hold in front of their person.

It is of interest here to note that Captain Matthew Flinders,[3] as far back as 1803, made a similar observation on the mainland opposite. He saw a girl at Caledon Bay who "wore a small piece of bark, in guise of a fig leaf, which was the sole approximation to clothing seen."

[1] *Vide* also *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 10.
[2] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* p. 14.
[3] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, p. 212.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

the mainland. In the first place no spears are manufactured for projecting by other method than simply by hand. No spear-throwers, so much in evidence among all true Australian tribes, are in use on these islands. Yet light spears were observed which really marked the beginning of the development of the arrow. These were seen to be used by youths at play and during their sham fights. Light green sticks, a little over a metre in length and slightly more than a lead pencil's thickness, are cut and scraped to a simple point at one end. The opposite end, that is, the back- or hand-end, is next put to the mouth and split with the teeth along its fibres into several strips some 10 centimetres long. The split pieces are then bent outwards like the feathers of an arrow and the toy weapon is ready for use. It can be hurled by hand with astounding precision. The opponents evade the missiles by dodging and crouching and contorting their bodies in much the same clever manner as I have described[1] of the Larrekiya and Wogait tribes.

Strictly speaking, one type of spear prevails. It is made of a single piece of solid wood, straightened to a greater or less degree over a fire. It is barbed at the front end and tapers to a simple point behind. The extreme variations in length and, consequently, in weight also, of this spear attract the attention at first sight. It is nothing unusual to find spears measuring 450 centimetres in length and weighing 2,700 grammes, but at the same time the smaller specimens measure only 250 centimetres in length and weigh 370 grammes. When we consider that a fair average length of the Northern Territory spear is 300 centimetres and a good average weight 260 grammes, the maxima of the islanders' spears quoted seem very remarkable indeed. The more do these appeal to us since the largest species of the indigenous fauna is but a fair-sized wallaby. Crocodiles are comparatively scarce, and the buffalo, introduced from Timor by Captain Barlow, first commandant of Fort Dundas, in 1826, is practically unknown on Bathurst Island. On Melville Island, where similar spears are in use, the buffalo is very plentiful, but it is a singular fact that the natives do not hunt this beast to any considerable extent.

The head of the spear has many barbs carved on one side and, occasionally, on two diametrically opposite sides. There are usually from ten to thirty barbs, which are directed backwards (*vide* Plate IX, Fig. 5 (Series)). Behind these there may or may not be from four to eight small serrations that stand out at right angles to the length of the shaft. In other cases, too, some six or more barbs are cut at the back part of the spear-head pointing the opposite way, that is, in the direction the spear is thrown. The spear heads have a long point resembling a cutting-blade or spike. The barbs are symmetrically carved with sharp edges and point. They are flattish lancet-shaped, with a central ridge on the outside, and project from the head to various degrees of prominence in different specimens. Many of the spears are longitudinally grooved with an adze, either for the whole of their length or along the head-end only. They are occasionally coloured and decorated with ochre, some

[1] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 33.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940)1943 0120 Tiwi 0120

MELVILLE AND BATHURST ISLANDERS: A SHORT DESCRIPTION

By W. E. HARNEY and A. P. ELKIN[1]

133 *Type of Country.* These islands are fairly large, measuring together about 150 miles from east to west and about 50 miles across the widest part. It is flat country composed of lateritic overburden covering a chalky and, in some places, a green stone full of fossils (Ammonites, Belemites, etc.). At one time it was probably connected with the mainland, and the Apsley Strait which separates the two islands was in those days a continuation of the Adelaide River.

137 The timber is mostly stringybark, bloodwood, and fan palm, while along the shores is the usual jungle growth that can be found in these parts. Wallabies and 136 other game are also present, but no porcupine (echidna), native cat or emu. Dingoes 231 are plentiful. This is the reason for the natives having few dogs. The tame dog (*wongine*), while out hunting alone, is often destroyed by these dingoes, *diamini*. 825 According to the natives, the dingoes do this because they are annoyed with the native dogs for taking some of their food. They (the *diamini*) are the rightful owners and the dog is an intruder.

142 *The Natives.* The natives of these islands, all of whom speak one language, are an unusual type. Curly hair predominates, but occasionally we find a straight-haired and a curly haired person in the same family. The cicatrices on their bodies 304 are of the palm leaf pattern, though the straight lines of the mainland people may often be seen. They bear numerous small cuts on their foreheads and various parts 757 of the body, caused by the practice of blood-letting as a cure for sickness.

●101 *Tribal Name.* The tribal name of these people is an open question. At one time Mr. Harney called them Nimara, their word for language or talk. They have a word, Tunawini, one black man, but this term can embrace people of other tribes; it comes from the words *tiwi*, men (Hart's name for these natives, *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, p. 167), *tini*, man, *tiya*, woman. They have, however, a term Worunguwe, which embraces them all—clans, horde places, people—and excludes other tribes such as Iwaidja, Larrakia, etc. The Iwaidja people call the Melville Island natives by that name, and Mr. Harney suggests that we should use it. Hart's term is not really a tribal name for it simply means people. Father McGrath suggests a name

[114] [1] Mr. W. E. Harney is the exceptional layman who understands Aboriginal culture. For a number of years he and I have been collaborating in the study of a number of Aboriginal tribes of the Northern Territory. This article is a brief summary of information gathered by Mr. Harney while engaged in work on Melville and Bathurst Islands. It has been checked, discussed with Mr. Harney, and rewritten by myself. For some parts of this paper readers are advised to refer to the following articles by C. W. M. Hart: "The Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 2, pp. 167-180, and "Personal Names Amongst the Tiwi," *Oceania*, Vol. I, No. 3, pp. 80-90.—A. P. ELKIN.

9:Harney & Elkin E-4, 5 (ca. 1940) 1943 0120 Tiwi 0120

which is interesting. It means the "Moon People" and is probably the name of the tribe displaced by the Purakapale people in the past. It is Arakitamun-uwi (plural), Arakitamun-ini (masculine), Arakitamun-inga (feminine).

Horde Places. Living in isolated groups, these people talk of horde places. A man from the south of Bathurst Island will tell you he is of the Tikaluwila people, in the horde place of Tikalaru, the country. Thus a man is a Tikaluwinala and a woman is a Tikiluwinila of the country of Tikalaru in the tribe of Worunguwi. (Hart writes Tiklauila).

As it is with this horde so it is with all the groups, three of which are on Bathurst Island; Tikalaru on the south of the Island, Arangu on the north, and Malo on the western shore of the Island. We are not sure of the Melville Island divisions but the following are fairly reliable: Mundiimpu, Anangatera, Yaimpi, being three hordes united as one horde on the southern shore; Turupu and Maruwu, two hordes living as one horde to the north-east of the Island; and Wilarunggu and Munaipu, two hordes living as one local group on the north-west of the Island. (This does not conflict with Hart's list.)

These hordes have indefinite tribal boundaries, yet it is considered a transgression to go too far into them for hunting purposes. One law relating to food gathering is, "He who burns the grass first is considered to own all the food that is caught on that burnt patch; he is a boss as it were and remains such until after the cold weather sets in and the dews bring on a new lot of grass."

Clans. Although the people are divided into numerous hordes they have only three clans (*aramipi*), but each of these clans has a number of sub-totems, *emuya*.[1] These may be survivals of weaker clans or possibly an example of classificatory totemism. Hart calls the *aramipi*, phratries. The totems are:

1. Main totem	*Kudjarli*	Fire
Sub-totems	*Yarinapila*	Red ochre
	Iywati	Honey nest
	Pinkwarui	Stingray
	Ilitui	Tree with red flower
	Woriapita	Sun
2. Main totem	*Tukambani*	Martin
Sub-totems	*Tapitapini*	March fly
	Buygaluwila	Stone
	Ariyguwila	Stone.
3. Main totem	*Miatui*	Pandanus
Sub-totems	*Murukpungama*	Flying fox
	Mudumbila	Mullet
	Mandupowi	Fly
	Andolui	Spring
	Tjilati	Jabaru.

[1] The same name as the gall-bladder and the pulse.

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

137
342
361

Fig. 1. Snake Bay Settlement

114 Islanders on a hunt. The trip took us to a small clearing on the right bank of the Paluwiunga River, ten miles upstream from where it empties into the Arafura Sea.

131 A brief glance at the map will help to further pinpoint this location. Ten degrees south of the equator and at a distance of twenty to fifty miles due north from the Australian Northern Territory capital of Darwin, lies the relatively large Melville Island (1,000 square miles), named for Viscount Henry Dundas Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty, who authorized the coastal survey of 1818 during which the island was circumnavigated. To the west, separated by a narrow strait, lies the smaller Bathurst
● 101 Island. The group of people with whom I found myself camped by the river bank were members of the Tiwi, a tribe of Australian Aboriginals whose country includes both these islands. Today about
[161 361 797] seven hundred members of the tribe live near to the southeast corner of Bathurst Island where they are in various ways administered to by the Sacred Heart Mission. On the northern coast of Melville
161 361 648 Island, on a hill overlooking Snake Bay, near the mouth of the